(c) An area of 4,010 ha of coffee plantations have been raised in the project upto 1984. Since the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has come into effect, no fresh plantations have been raised in the notified forest area by APFDC as raising of new commercial crops like tea, coffee, spices, rubber etc., is a non forest activity and prohibited under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

Dumping of e-waste

3418. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the country is turning into a dumping ground for e-waste of developed nations;

(b) if, so the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken by Government to tackle this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) Import of wastes is not allowed for dumping/disposal purposes in India as per the provisions of the Hazardous Wastes (Management, Handling and Trans-boundary Movements) Rules, 2008. However, import of recyclable wastes like plastics, paper wastes and metal scrap conforming to the specifications mentioned in the Rules is allowed for recycling subject to necessary approvals from the concerned authorities.

The Rules require all consignments to be accompanied by a pre shipment inspection certificate/test report from an accredited laboratory and a movement document. The Customs authorities are required to take random samples from the consignments to prevent misdeclaration. Further, the ministry has constituted a co-ordination committee including representatives from the Department of Revenue, DGFT, Central Pollution Control Board, State Pollution Control Boards and experts to oversee the implementation of the provisions laid down in the Rules, specially related to import and export of hazardous wastes.

Moratorium on open and field trials of GM crops

3419. SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had made any study as to the impact of introduction of GM research and commercial release of GM foods in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government is planning to enforce a moratorium on all open and field trials of GM crops until an independent analysis proving safety to human life and environment is conducted; and

(c) whether Government would put pressure on States which had banned its introduction especially Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) The Government of India is following a policy of case by case assessment of

genetically modified (GM) crops. In view of various concerns related to the safety, efficacy and agronomic performance of transgenic seeds, extensive evaluation and regulatory approval process takes place before any GM plant is approved for commercial cultivation. This includes generation of relevant biosafety information and its elaborate analysis to ensure food, feed and environmental safety. The environmental safety assessment includes studies on pollen escape out-crossing, aggressiveness and weediness, effect of the gene on non-target organisms, presence of protein in soil and its effect on soil micro-flora, confirmation of the absence of terminator gene and baseline susceptibility studies. The food and feed safety studies include assessment on composition analysis, allergenicity and toxicological studies and feeding studies on fish, chicken, cows and buffaloes. In case, the transgenic crop is not found suitable for release in the environment or human consumption, the product is rejected during the trial stage itself. A final view on the commercialization of GM plants is taken only when there is a clear economic and technical justification for release of the product.

(b) There is no proposal to enforce a moratorium on all open field trials of GM crops. All field trials are subject to stringent norms such as maintaining (i) a crop specific isolation distance from the periphery of the experimental site to other sexually compatible rice fields as prescribed under the Indian Minimum Seed Certification Standards; (ii) biological barrier by planting border rows all around the experimental plot; (iii) submission of a validated event specific test protocol of 0.01% before undertaking the trials and (iv) Post harvest restrictions. The prescribed stipulations are adequate to minimize contamination due to gene flow, if any.

(c) The mandate of this Ministry under 'Rules for Manufacture, Use, Import, Export and Storage of Hazardous Micro Organisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells 1989' of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, is to address only biosafety issues before according approval for environmental release. This Ministry has no role in deciding commercial cultivation of agricultural seeds, genetically modified or otherwise in any state including Kerala.

Levy of carbon fee

3420. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to levy carbon fee in order to reduce carbon in environment; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) There is no such proposal under consideration by the Government.

Pollution by slaughter houses

3421. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state: